



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center and Gardens
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944 Fax (323) 221-9934

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Officer

DATE: June 1, 2005

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XI: Consideration of resolution authorizing the use of funds from Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation District No. 1 to acquire an approximately 3.35-acre conservation easement over APN 2272-002-028 (Hollyline Avenue) in Sherman Oaks.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the use of funds from Santa Monica Mountains Open Space Preservation District No. 1 to acquire an approximately 3.35-acre conservation easement over APN 2272-002-028 (Hollyline Avenue) in Sherman Oaks.

Background: The subject 3.35-acre property abuts Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy-owned Fossil Ridge Park in Sherman Oaks. It is part of an east-facing slope with a dense coverage of California black walnut trees. It is also part of a key section of the east-west wildlife movement corridor along the north-facing slope of the eastern Santa Monica Mountains. The property is accessible from the end of Hollyline Avenue. The eastern boundary of the property is occupied by a cemented storm drain easement that effectively reduces the open space value of the site to 3.22 acres. The owner of the property lives on the adjacent lot to the east.

The owner is willing to sell the fee simple property at a price close to that negotiated for a conservation easement. However, as shown on the attached aerial photograph, there is a large house built directly along the western boundary of the subject parcel. The result could be up 0.5 acres of annual brush clearance. Because the principal value of the site is for habitat purposes, staff pursued a conservation easement. A trail easement was also not pursued because there is no closely proximate connector trail within Fossil Ridge Park, and because it is important to keep major portions of the park free of domestic pets to ensure its habitat viability for bobcats and grey fox.

To date no acquisitions have been made with Assessment District funding within Area A of District No. 1 (west of Coldwater and north of Mulholland). A one-acre parcel on the west side of Fossil Ridge Park was acquired by the MRCA with a grant

Agenda Item XI
June 1, 2005
Page 2

from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. The Citizens Oversight Committee for District One adopted a resolution deeming the property consistent with the Final Engineer's Report on November 10, 2004.

A confidential acquisition summary will be passed out at the Governing Board meeting.

I